Parental Concerns and The Role of Language as Medium of Instruction in School Selection

Thesis Submitted to

Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences

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Approval Certificate

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **"Parental Concerns and The Role of Language as Medium of Instruction in School Selection"** submitted by **Sami Ullah et al.,** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Bachelors** in English Literature and Linguistics, has been examined and approved by the undersigned for the award of degree.

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Undertaking

We, Sami Ullah et al., students of BS in English Literature and Linguistics at Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUITEMS), Quetta, do hereby solemnly declare that the thesis entitled "**Parental Concerns and The Role of Language as medium of Instruction in School Selection"** submitted by us in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Science in English Literature and Linguistics, is our original work. It has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

We further declare that this thesis shall not, in future, be submitted by us for the award of any other degree.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Allah Almighty, who has guided and blessed us throughout this journey. To our parents, who have nurtured us with love and supported us with prayers, inspiring us to reach our goals. To Dr. Liaquat Ali Channa, our revered mentor, who has shared his wisdom and experience, enriching our academic pursuits and instilling valuable life lessons. To our siblings, who have been our constant companions, offering support, encouragement, and understanding throughout this journey.

Abstract

This study explores how language as a medium of instruction influences parents' decisions when selecting schools for their children in Quetta, Balochistan. It aims to understand parents' perceptions, beliefs, and concerns in a region characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity. Using a qualitative research design, data was collected through semi-structured interviews with parents from different social and educational backgrounds. The findings reveal that most parents prefer English-medium schools because they associate English with better career prospects, higher social status, and academic achievement. However, many parents also value their mother tongues, such as Balochi, Pashto, and Brahui, for emotional connection and cultural preservation. Moreover, parents experience an ongoing tension between maintaining their cultural identity and preparing their children for success in a globalized, English-dominated environment. In addition, the study highlights that limited institutional support and unequal access to quality English education have deepened social and educational inequalities between public and private schools. Therefore, language is not only viewed as a tool for learning but also as a marker of identity, opportunity, and class distinction. In conclusion, this research emphasizes the urgent need for balanced and inclusive language policies that encourage multilingual education. Such an approach would promote both educational equity and cultural preservation, ensuring that all children in Balochistan regardless of their background receive fair opportunities to learn, grow, and succeed.

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Chapter1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Education is universally recognized as a cornerstone of societal development, influencing economic growth, social mobility, and cultural preservation (UNESCO, 2015). In Pakistan, the choice of school for children is one of the most significant and challenging decisions parents face. This decision impacts not only on a child's education but also on their personal and social development. Parents navigate various factors, such as educational philosophies, school reputations, facilities, and curriculums. However, one critical factor influencing parental decision-making is the language used as the medium of instruction (MOI) (West, Hind, & Pennell, 2004). This issue is especially pressing in multilingual regions like Quetta, Balochistan, where the medium of instruction carries cultural, economic, and political implications (Nambissan, 2000). The idea for this research arose from observing parents who were grappling with such decisions. Many expressed concerns about the language their children would learn best in and how the chosen medium would affect their future opportunities. For instance, some parents preferred English-medium schools, associating them with better career prospects and global opportunities (Byun et al., 2011; Woessmann et al., 2009). Others favored education in their mother tongue, valuing cultural preservation and emotional connection (Nambissan, 2000). This conflict between practicality and cultural identity highlights the complexity of these choices in Quetta, a region rich in linguistic diversity but marked by educational inequalities.

Pakistan's education system is characterized by a dual structure, comprising government schools (public schools operated by the state) and private institutions (public schools that charge fees). Public schools, which offer free education, primarily use Urdu or regional

languages as the medium of instruction. In contrast, private schools often provide instruction in English, making them an attractive option for parents seeking better educational outcomes for their children (ASER Pakistan, 2015). However, the decision to enroll children in either type of school is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including socio-economic status, cultural values, and perceptions of quality education (Bashir & Naseem, 2019). Language has become a critical determinant in this decision-making process, reflecting broader societal trends and aspirations.

1.1.1 The Role of Language in Education and School Selection

Language is not merely a medium of communication; it is a powerful tool that shapes cognitive development, cultural identity, and social integration. Research has consistently shown that early education in a child's mother tongue enhances academic success, social cohesion, and cognitive abilities (UNESCO, 2007). UNESCO (2003) emphasizes the importance of multilingual education in ensuring equitable learning outcomes, particularly in societies where multiple languages coexist. In such contexts, parents often face the challenge of choosing between schools that offer instruction in their native language and those that provide education in a language associated with greater economic opportunities (Benson, 2002; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009).

In Quetta, languages such as Balochi, Brahui, Pashto, and Urdu coexist alongside English, which dominates higher education and official communication (Mansoor, 1993). Parents find themselves at a crossroads, balancing aspirations for economic mobility with preserving cultural and linguistic identity (Nambissan, 2000; Mansoor, 1993). Research indicates that the preference for English often stems from its association with upward mobility and access to elite positions, while regional languages, though important for cultural identity, are perceived to have limited socio-economic utility (Mansoor, 1993; Tollefson, 1991).

This study seeks to explore how language influences school selection in Quetta, providing insights into the factors driving parental decisions and their implications for educational equity. By understanding these dynamics, policymakers can develop strategies to create a more inclusive and accessible education system that values linguistic diversity and promotes social mobility. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that all children, regardless of their socio-economic background, have the opportunity to succeed in a multilingual and multicultural world.

1.2 Problem Statement

In Quetta, Balochistan, parents play a critical role in deciding where to enroll their children in school. For many families, language is a key factor influencing this decision, reflecting not only educational priorities but also aspirations for social mobility, cultural preservation, and future opportunities for their children (Rokita-Jaśkow, 2013). In a linguistically diverse region like Quetta, understanding the perspectives of parents is crucial for designing inclusive educational policies and practices that align with the needs and aspirations of families, while promoting equitable access to quality education.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To explore how the language as a medium of instruction influences parents' perceptions when selecting a school for their children.
2. To understand the perceptions of parents regarding the role of language in their children’s academic success and future opportunities.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How does the language as a medium of instruction influence parents' perceptions when selecting a school for their children?
2. What are the perceptions of parents regarding the role of language in their children’s academic success and future opportunities?

1.5 Significance of Study

This study aimed to explore the role of language in parental decision-making when choosing schools in Quetta, Balochistan, a region characterized by linguistic diversity and complex socio-cultural dynamics. Understanding how language influences parents' perceptions of education is crucial, especially in multilingual contexts where language preferences can affect educational outcomes and social mobility.

Moreover, this study has provided valuable insights for policymakers, school administrators, and educators in Quetta. Understanding the language-related factors that influence school choice enables educational institutions to better address the needs of diverse linguistic communities and design more inclusive curricula. It also helps develop policies that accommodate parents' preferences regarding language, ensuring that educational choices align with local expectations and aspirations.

Chapter2 Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

Language plays a pivotal role in shaping educational outcomes, social mobility, and economic opportunities. In multilingual societies like Pakistan, the choice of instructional language significantly influences parental decisions regarding school selection. This literature review explores the role of language in school selection, focusing on the sociolinguistic diversity of Pakistan, the divide between public and private schools, and the factors influencing parental preferences. It synthesizes existing research on medium of instruction policies, educational inequality, academic performance, and socio-economic implications, with a particular focus on Quetta, a linguistically diverse city in Balochistan.

2.2 Medium of Instruction Policies in Pakistan

The choice of language as the medium of instruction has been a longstanding and contentious issue in Pakistan's education system. Historically, language policies have fluctuated, creating a divide between public and private schools. Asif et al. (2020) note that the emphasis on English as the primary instructional language has caused learning difficulties, particularly in rural areas. Public schools, which primarily use Urdu, face challenges such as limited resources and untrained teachers, while private schools focus on English-medium education, catering mainly to wealthier families (Andrabi et al., 2002).

2.3 The Pakistani School System and Language-Based Inequality

Language serves as a major determinant of access to quality education. Private schools, predominantly English-medium, cater to wealthier families, creating educational inequality (Andrabi et al., 2002). Public schools, where Urdu is often the medium of instruction, face

challenges such as overcrowded classrooms and outdated teaching methods (Rehman et al., 2010). In Quetta, this inequality directly shapes parental choices as parents weigh the benefits of English-medium education against the affordability of Urdu-medium public schools. English is often viewed as a symbol of prestige and quality, and parents associate proficiency in it with future career success (Rahman, 2004).

Public schools predominantly use Urdu or regional languages, while private schools emphasize English-medium instruction, reinforcing socioeconomic stratification (Shamim & Rashid, 2019). English-medium schools are perceived as superior, though many students struggle with comprehension due to linguistic barriers (Shamim, 2008). Rahman (2002) further argues that these language policies perpetuate socio-economic divides, as quality English education remains accessible mainly to the elite.

2.4 The Role of Language Diversity in Education

Pakistan is a linguistically diverse country with over 70 languages spoken across its regions (Khan et al., 2024). The language hierarchy places English at the top, followed by Urdu, while regional languages such as Balochi, Pashto, Sindhi, and Brahui remain marginalized in education and administration (Rahman, 2002).

The colonial legacy entrenched English as the language of governance, linking it to social status and economic power (Mahboob, 2014). Urdu, as the national language, dominates public school instruction but poses challenges for children from non-Urdu-speaking homes. Meanwhile, regional languages remain excluded from mainstream education, leading to cultural disconnection among learners (Manan & David, 2014). To promote inclusivity, researchers such as Coleman (2010) and Capstick (2011) advocate for multilingual education that integrates mother tongue instruction with Urdu and English. This model supports better

learning outcomes, language acquisition, and cognitive development while preserving linguistic diversity.

2.5 Socio-Cultural and Economic Implications of Language Choice

Language choice in education is intertwined with social and economic mobility. English-medium education is often viewed as a pathway to upward mobility, even though it is not the home language of most students (Phillipson, 2009). Parents in urban areas associate English proficiency with better job prospects and higher social standing (Rahman, 2006).

However, this preference deepens inequality, as access to quality English education remains limited to families who can afford private schooling (Andrabi et al., 2008). Public schools primarily using Urdu or regional languages serve lower-income families, perpetuating the cycle of disadvantage (Tollefson, 1991). Parents from middle and upper classes consider English-medium education an investment in their children's future, while lower-income families often choose schools based on affordability and proximity (Shamim, 2008). This dynamic demonstrates how language becomes both a gateway to opportunity and a marker of class distinction.

2.6 Theoretical Perspectives on Language and School Choice

Parental school choice is shaped by multiple social, cultural, and economic factors. Classical economic theories suggest that parents select schools based on measurable academic outcomes (Hastings et al., 2014). However, in multilingual contexts, the choice of medium of instruction plays a greater role than academic reputation alone (Burgess et al., 2014). Parents perceive English as a language of progress and privilege, influencing their school choices accordingly (Dearden, 2014). In multilingual societies, these language-based preferences contribute to educational stratification (Smits et al., 2008). The continua of biliteracy framework

(Hornberger, 2008) also explains how privileging one language over another creates social and academic imbalance. In urban centers like Quetta, English proficiency is seen as a tool for upward mobility, often at the expense of cultural and linguistic identity (Shamim, 2011; Phillipson, 1992).

2.7 Parental Preferences and Language-Based School Selection

Parental decision-making regarding school selection is deeply influenced by the language of instruction. In Pakistan, English is widely perceived as a language of prestige, power, and upward mobility (Rahman, 2004). Many parents prefer English-medium schools because they believe English proficiency will open doors to better employment and higher education opportunities (Shamim, 2011).

However, studies show that this preference does not always lead to better learning outcomes. Students in English-medium schools may face comprehension difficulties when English is not their first language (Shamim, 2008). Despite this, many parents—especially from middle-income backgrounds—make financial sacrifices to send their children to private English-medium schools, associating them with higher academic quality and better discipline (Clifton, 2009). Lower-income families, on the other hand, often choose schools based on affordability and proximity. While they value English proficiency, economic constraints and accessibility make Urdu-medium or regional-language schools their practical choice (Shamim, 2008). Some also prefer these schools to preserve cultural identity and maintain community connections (UNESCO, 2008b). This shows a clear pattern of language-based educational inequality, where access to quality schooling and English education depends largely on family income and social class (Rahman, 2015; Manan et al., 2014).

2.8 Parental Decision-Making Factors

Parental school choice involves a combination of academic, linguistic, and socio-economic factors. Parents from higher socio-economic backgrounds tend to enroll their children in private English-medium schools due to the perceived advantages of English in career and communication (Mansoor, 2004). Meanwhile, middle- and lower-income families often opt for Urdu-medium government schools, which are more affordable and accessible (Rahman, 2004).

Other studies also note the influence of school reputation, proximity, and parental education level (Lodhi et al., 2014). Educated parents act as "active choosers," gathering information about schools and comparing their language policies (Bosetti, 2007). In contrast, less educated or economically constrained parents are often "non-active choosers," who depend on location or family recommendations rather than school quality indicators. Language thus becomes a social filter—families with greater resources can access English-based education and the economic advantages it brings, while others are left with limited linguistic and educational opportunities (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

2.9 Bilingual and Multilingual Schooling Preferences

In the modern global context, many parents are turning toward bilingual or multilingual education, viewing it as a balance between local identity and global opportunity. Hanik et al. (2024) found that parents choose bilingual schools primarily to ensure English proficiency, which they consider essential for academic and professional success. Bilingual schools also attract parents for their interactive learning environments and cultural exposure.

Similarly, studies from other multilingual societies reveal that parents believe early exposure to English enhances university readiness and job competitiveness (Jayanti & Sujarwo, 2019; Widyasari, 2013). However, some parents still value local language education for preserving

identity and communication within the community. These findings emphasize that parental school selection reflects not only academic ambitions but also language ideologies—beliefs about which languages symbolize intelligence, progress, or belonging.

2.10 Challenges in Implementing English-Medium Instruction (Mehmood et al., 2025)

A comprehensive study by Mehmood et al. (2025) examined the challenges associated with English-medium instruction (EMI) in Pakistani schools. The study identified five major issues affecting the effectiveness of EMI and its impact on parental perceptions and student outcomes.

2.10.1 Teacher Proficiency

Many teachers in public schools lack adequate English proficiency, which affects their ability to deliver lessons effectively. This often results in code-switching between English and Urdu, leading to confusion among students and reduced learning quality. Parents who notice this tend to view private schools as more capable of providing consistent English instruction.

2.10.2 Student Confidence and Language Anxiety

Students in public schools frequently experience language anxiety due to fear of making mistakes in English. Their limited exposure to the language—both inside and outside school—discourages participation and affects academic confidence. This contributes to parents' preference for English-medium private schools, where English is more systematically taught and practiced.

2.10.3 Parental Involvement

Many parents, particularly in rural areas, lack English proficiency and are unable to assist their children with English homework or communication. This reduces their involvement in their

children's education, further widening the performance gap between English- and Urdu-medium students.

2.10.4 Cultural Resistance

Some parents resist English-medium education, believing it erodes cultural values and alienates students from their native identity and regional languages. This resistance creates a tension between economic aspirations and cultural preservation, particularly in linguistically diverse areas like Balochistan.

2.10.5 Institutional Support

The lack of institutional support, such as teacher training, English learning materials, and classroom resources, hampers the effectiveness of EMI in public schools. As a result, private institutions are perceived as more successful in implementing English-medium education, reinforcing the existing class divide. Collectively, these findings show that while parents view English-medium education as a means of upward mobility, its implementation faces serious socio-cognitive and infrastructural challenges.

2.11 Socioeconomic and Educational Inequality

Socioeconomic status heavily influences language-related school selection. Wealthier households can afford private English-medium schools with better facilities and teachers, while lower-income families rely on government schools with limited English instruction (De Talancé, 2020). Gender disparities also persist, with boys more likely to be sent to private schools due to cultural priorities favoring male education (Purewal & Hashmi, 2015). In times of financial crisis, as seen in Lebanon (Al Khalili, 2025), many middle-class parents shift their children between private and public schools depending on affordability. This pattern is also

visible in Pakistan, where economic instability forces parents to balance between quality education and financial survival.

2.12 Policy Implications and Educational Reform

The dominance of English-medium education in Pakistan has led to teacher shortages, inconsistent instruction, and unequal learning outcomes (Wiley & Arias, 2013). To address these challenges, education policies must strike a balance between national cohesion and linguistic diversity. Scholars suggest adopting multilingual education policies that begin with mother tongue instruction and gradually introduce Urdu and English (Samuelson et al., 2013; Coleman, 2010). This approach enhances comprehension, preserves linguistic identity, and ensures equity in access to education. Government initiatives should also focus on improving the quality of Urdu-medium public schools, enhancing teacher training, and equipping classrooms with language resources (GoP, 2009). Public awareness campaigns can help parents understand the benefits of multilingual education that values both economic progress and cultural preservation (Rahman, 2015). Ultimately, promoting linguistic diversity rather than privileging one language can reduce inequality and support a more inclusive education system in Balochistan and beyond.

2.13 Summary of the Literature

The reviewed literature shows that the medium of instruction plays a critical role in shaping educational outcomes and parental school selection in Pakistan. The country's linguistic diversity, combined with historical and policy-based inequalities, has created a system where access to quality education is closely linked to language. English has become a symbol of modernity, progress, and upward mobility. Parents often associate English-medium education with better job opportunities and social status, even when it is not the child's first language

(Rahman, 2004; Phillipson, 2009). Public schools that use Urdu or regional languages are perceived as inferior due to limited resources and weak teacher training (Shamim, 2008). As a result, English-medium private schools are considered more desirable but remain accessible mainly to wealthier families, reinforcing educational inequality (Andrabi et al., 2008).

Studies from multilingual contexts highlight that students learn best when taught in their mother tongue during early education (Coleman, 2010; Hornberger, 2003). However, Pakistan's education policies continue to prioritize Urdu and English over regional languages (Rahman, 2005). This creates challenges for children from non-Urdu-speaking households, who struggle to connect with the school curriculum and lose touch with their linguistic and cultural roots (Manan & David, 2014).

Parental decision-making is further influenced by economic capacity, school reputation, and perceived social benefits of English. Wealthier families act as "active choosers" who intentionally select English-medium schools, while lower-income families remain "non-active choosers," constrained by affordability and access (Bosetti, 2007). These patterns demonstrate how language choice reinforces existing class divisions within Pakistani society.

The study by Mehmood et al. (2025) adds depth by identifying specific challenges in implementing English-medium instruction, such as poor teacher proficiency, student anxiety, parental disengagement, cultural resistance, and a lack of institutional support. These findings highlight that the issue is not simply about language preference but also about the quality and equity of educational delivery.

2.14 Research Gap

While numerous studies have examined language policies and school selection in Pakistan, most have focused on broader national trends or urban centers like Lahore, Karachi, and

Islamabad. There is limited research exploring how language as a medium of instruction influences parental decisions in Balochistan, particularly in Quetta, where linguistic diversity is far more complex.

Existing research emphasizes the national divide between Urdu- and English-medium schools, but little is known about how parents in multilingual regions balance their cultural values, economic goals, and linguistic preferences when selecting schools for their children. This gap is significant because Quetta represents a unique mix of ethnic and linguistic groups—Balochi, Pashto, Brahui, and Urdu speakers making it an ideal setting to understand how language ideologies shape school selection. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by exploring how parental concerns about the medium of instruction influence school choice at the government primary level in Balochistan.

2.15 Conclusion

The literature clearly demonstrates that language choice in education is not only a matter of communication but also of identity, class, and opportunity. In Pakistan's multilingual context, English-medium instruction is often seen as a bridge to economic advancement, while Urdu and regional languages carry cultural and communal significance. Parents' school selection decisions are shaped by the perceived link between language and success. However, structural inequalities—such as limited teacher training, poor school infrastructure, and unequal access to English education—continue to deepen the divide between social classes. For Balochistan, understanding these language-related parental concerns is essential. It can help policymakers design inclusive language policies that promote both educational equity and linguistic diversity, ensuring that children receive quality education without losing their cultural identity.

Chapter3 Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design, chosen for its ability to explore and understand how individuals perceive and interpret the world around them. Qualitative research is particularly valuable in social sciences such as communication studies, cultural studies, and psychology, as it allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives (Glesne, 2016). Given our focus on the role of language in parental decision-making for school selection, a qualitative approach is well-suited to capture participants' voices and provide rich, contextual insights into their concerns and priorities.

3.2 Research Method

By adopting semi-structured interviews, the study delves into the parental perspective, enabling us to explore diverse perspectives from participants of varying socioeconomic backgrounds. Semi-structured interviews offer flexibility, allowing for the natural flow of conversation while providing structure through pre-designed open-ended questions (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021).

3.3 Sampling Method

This study used a convenient purposive sampling method. In qualitative research, purposive sampling helps the researcher select participants who can provide rich and relevant information about the topic (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). The sample was purposive because the participants were parents of school-going children in Quetta, Balochistan, and could share real experiences about school selection and language preferences. At the same time, the sampling was convenient because most participants were personally known or easily accessible to us, which made communication and data collection easier. Such an approach is common in

qualitative studies where trust and comfort help participants speak openly (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3.4 Data Collection

Data is collected through semi-structured interviews with parents. This method provides flexibility to adapt questions based on the flow of conversation while maintaining a focus on key research objectives. The interview guide includes open-ended questions designed to explore how language as a medium of instruction influences school selection. Follow-up probe questions have been used to gain deeper insights into specific themes (Dörnyei, 2007).

Additionally, demographic information such as participants' educational background, socioeconomic status, and primary language is collected to contextualize their responses. Measures are taken to ensure ethical data collection, including informed consent and confidentiality.

3.5 Participant Coding and Anonymity

All participants in the study were given coded titles such as Participant A, Participant B, Participant C, and so on, to ensure confidentiality and maintain ethical standards. The titles were assigned according to the order in which the interviews were conducted and transcribed. Along with the codes, the gender of each participant was also mentioned (for example, Participant A: Female) to provide contextual understanding. This simple coding method helped organize the data clearly while keeping the participants' identities private.

3.6 Context of the Study

The study is conducted in Quetta, Balochistan, a region characterized by linguistic diversity and educational disparities. Languages spoken in the region include Balochi, Brahui, Pashto, Urdu, and English, creating unique challenges for parents navigating school selection. By

focusing on this context, the research aims to shed light on how cultural and linguistic factors intersect with educational decision-making in a multilingual society.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data collected from interviews is analyzed by using thematic data analysis. This involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within the data to understand recurring themes and unique insights. The iterative nature of qualitative research allows us to refine our analysis as new data emerge, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

3.8 Rationale for the Methodology

Qualitative research was chosen for its ability to capture the complexity and depth of the factors influencing parental decision-making. Its flexibility allows for an adaptive approach, accommodating the diverse perspectives of parents. Semi-structured interviews, combined with convenience sampling, will enable the collection of detailed, meaningful data specific to the research focus. This methodology uncovers the valuable insights into how parents in Quetta navigate the challenges of school selection, particularly regarding the role of language as a medium of instruction.

Chapter 4 Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the data collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with parents from different social and educational backgrounds in Quetta, Balochistan. The main aim of this chapter is to explore how parents perceive the role of language as a medium of instruction in school selection and what concerns they have while choosing schools for their children. Since the study is qualitative in nature, the analysis is based on the themes that emerged from the participants' responses. Each interview was carefully transcribed and coded to identify key ideas related to parental concerns, language preferences, perceptions of English, the value of mother tongue, and comparisons between government and private schools. Furthermore, direct quotations from the participants are included throughout the chapter to give voice to their experiences and opinions. These quotes represent real parental perspectives and make the findings more authentic and meaningful. The analysis also highlights the diversity of thought among parents, showing how factors such as education level, occupation, and language background influence their school choices.

4.2 Parental Concerns in School Selection

Parents in Quetta expressed various concerns while choosing a school for their children. These concerns mainly revolved around school environment, quality of teachers, safety, and proximity to home. Many parents considered these aspects even more important than the school's status or fees.

Participant A, a 35-year-old Brahui-speaking housewife, shared:

> *"I enrolled my eldest daughter in a government school because only girls study there — it's a girls-only school, and there are no boys. I enrolled my*

> *other two daughters in a nearby government school because it's close to home and they are still young."*

This statement reflects that safety and accessibility were major deciding factors for some mothers.

Similarly, Participant B emphasized the importance of school management and environment:

> *"First, we parent consider if the school environment is good, whether the teachers and principal are good, and if the school building is proper — so the children feel interested in going there… The school should also be in a safe location."*

Educated parents, like Participant E, highlighted different concerns such as class size and reputation. She stated:

> *"The school where I get my child admitted should have a good reputation. I also consider that the class size should be small so every teacher can give proper time to each student."*

Overall, the data shows that parents value a safe, well-managed, and supportive school environment, and that their concerns differ depending on their educational and professional background.

4.3 The Role of Language in Decision-Making

Language appeared as one of the most influential factors in parents' school selection. Most participants agreed that the medium of instruction affects their decision because it determines how well children will perform and communicate.

Participant C, a male parent, stated:

> *"The mother tongue is the language in which a child learns most effectively. Unfortunately, in our country, the mother tongue has never been taken seriously as a tool for learning."*

However, he also admitted that English is now considered the language of science and progress, which influences parents' choices.

Participant D, a post-doctorate scholar, supported the same view:

> *"The medium of instruction should be the child's mother tongue. This is a universal truth — a child learns best in their mother tongue."*

On the other hand, Participant E felt that English is essential for academic success, explaining:

> *"Absolutely, language is the most important thing because we communicate through language… the child should also know Urdu and English so that they can communicate when they go to school."*

The findings indicate that while many parents value the mother tongue for understanding, they also feel compelled to choose English-medium schools because of its status and future benefits.

4.4 Perceptions of English as a Language of Opportunity

A strong belief among parents was that English opens doors to better opportunities, both in education and employment. Many participants expressed that proficiency in English builds confidence and helps children succeed in life.

Participant B stated clearly:

> *"Yes, I believe that. That's why we put our children in private schools. Everything today especially social media — is in English. If a child doesn't know English, they will fail."*

Participant H, a female lecturer, echoed a similar belief:

> *"Of course. Most of us aren't well-suited for today's world of competition. To keep up with today's demands, English is really, really important for our children."*

Likewise, Participant F, a male lecturer, emphasized:

> *"My first preference was definitely a school where English is used. Because nowadays, we all know it's a global language, and most opportunities whether competitive exams or job interviews require good English skills."*

The data reveals that for most parents, English symbolizes success, modernity, and global connection. Even those who recognize its colonial roots still view it as a necessary tool for advancement.

4.5 Attitudes Toward the Mother Tongue and Multilingualism

While English was seen as a language of progress, several participants expressed emotional attachment and cultural pride toward their mother tongues such as Brahui, Pashto, and Balochi.

Participant A said:

> *"If children are taught in their mother tongue, they can understand better, which greatly affects their academic performance."*

Participant D also emphasized this:

> *"A child feels comfortable in the language they know. A child who studies in their own language can express themselves more easily compared to one who struggles with a foreign language."*

At the same time, Participant I provided a more balanced view:

> *"Balochi is our mother tongue, but our children can go anywhere in the world. So, children should be taught English and Urdu as well. I would send my child to a school where they can learn all languages."*

This shows that parents in Balochistan generally value multilingual education, where mother tongue, Urdu, and English coexist to strengthen both identity and opportunity.

4.6 Government vs. Private Schools: A Language-Based Comparison

Participants expressed mixed views about the differences between government and private schools. While some appreciated the experience of government teachers, others felt that private schools provide a better English environment.

Participant D shared:

> *"I prefer government schools because the human resources there are far better than private schools. Even a teacher with just an FSC qualification is employed in private schools, but in public schools the selection is done through a proper mechanism."*

In contrast, Participant F explained:

> *"Based on my experience, especially in Balochistan and Quetta, government school infrastructure is not on par with private schools. Also, in government schools, teachers don't give much time to students… So in my opinion, private schools are better."*

Similarly, Participant E stated:

> *"Private, obviously. In government schools, mostly communication is in Urdu, so that's why I prefer private schools."*

These varied responses show that parents' preferences are shaped by both qualities of teaching and language policy. While some value the stability and experience of government teachers, others associate private schools with better English learning.

4.7 Parents' Expectations for Their Children's Future

All participants shared high hopes and strong ambitions for their children's future. Most of them connected these dreams with the importance of English proficiency and a strong educational foundation.

Participant H expressed:

> *"I hope my children study hard, complete O-Levels and A-Levels, go abroad for further studies, and then come back and serve our country."*

Participant C similarly mentioned:

> *"I want my child to build a good career… A person who knows English can hide many flaws maybe because we were a colony once."*

Participant I added:

> *"I imagine a future where my child is given an education that includes Urdu, regional language, and English. I want them to be fluent in English and also speak Urdu and Balochi well."*

The data clearly shows that parents view language as not just a medium of education, but as a pathway to success, identity, and social mobility.

4.8 Summary of Findings

This chapter analyzed the responses of nine parents from different educational, social, and linguistic backgrounds in Quetta, Balochistan. The findings revealed that language plays a major role in parental decision-making when selecting schools for their children, though it is often linked with other factors such as the school's reputation, safety, quality of teaching, and accessibility. Additionally, most parents viewed English as a language of success and opportunity, strongly believing that English proficiency opens doors to better education and career prospects. Even parents who respected and valued their mother tongue felt that English-medium schools provide a stronger foundation for future growth. This shows that English is not only seen as a tool of communication but also as a symbol of progress and modern identity. At the same time, several participants highlighted the importance of the mother tongue in a child's early education. They believed that children understand concepts more easily and perform better when taught in their native language. However, they also acknowledged the lack of practical implementation of mother tongue education in Pakistan. Many participants expressed the wish for a balanced, multilingual approach, where English, Urdu, and regional languages coexist in the school curriculum.

The comparison between government and private schools brought out mixed views. Some parents appreciated the qualified and experienced teachers in government schools, while others preferred private schools for their stronger focus on English and better communication environment. For many, the decision depended on economic capacity, school reputation, and the child's individual needs. Another important finding was that all parents shared high aspirations for their children. They associated education and particularly language learning with the hope of achieving a better future. Whether educated or not, all parents wanted their children to be confident, capable, and successful in a multilingual and global society.

To wind up, the findings indicate that language is not only an academic concern but also a social and emotional one for parents in Balochistan. It reflects their desire for progress, cultural belonging, and empowerment. While the mother tongue is valued for understanding and identity, English remains the preferred choice for its global importance and perceived link to success. The chapter shows that parental school selection is deeply shaped by linguistic beliefs, socio-economic realities, and aspirations for upward mobility.

Chapter 5 Discussions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings from the interviews conducted with parents in Quetta, Balochistan, focusing on how language as a medium of instruction affects their school choices and perceptions of their children's future opportunities. The discussion connects these findings to the existing literature and is framed through the lens of language ideologies the shared beliefs and values attached to specific languages in society. The aim is to better understand why parents make certain decisions about language and education, what those choices mean in real-life contexts, and how these decisions reflect deeper social, cultural, and economic realities.

5.1.1 Language as a Medium of Instruction: A Deciding Factor

One of the most consistent findings from the interviews was that the language of instruction in schools plays a major role in shaping parental decisions. Many parents said they chose English-medium schools because they believe English offers more future opportunities for their children in higher education, jobs, and social mobility. This aligns with Rahman (2004) and Phillipson (2009), who explained that in Pakistan, English is often seen as the language of power, progress, and intelligence.

Even when parents recognized the academic difficulties that come with learning in a second language, they still prioritized English over the mother tongue or even Urdu. This shows how strong the ideology of English as a “success language” is in the minds of parents. As Shamim (2011) also pointed out, this preference exists despite the reality that children often struggle to understand subjects when taught in English.

5.1.2 Emotional Value of Mother Tongue: A Silent Loss

While most parents acknowledged the importance of the mother tongue in helping children learn better at a young age, very few were willing to choose schools that offered mother-tongue instruction mainly because such schools don't exist or are not seen as useful for the future. Parents expressed pride in their languages (such as Balochi, Brahui, Pashto, and Dehwari), but also sorrow and frustration that these languages have no value in the current education system.

This reflects what Bourdieu (1991) called "linguistic capital" the idea that certain languages hold more value in society. In the current education structure, regional languages are seen as "culturally rich" but not "economically useful," which leads parents to de-prioritize them in favor of English or Urdu. This also matches the findings of Hornberger (2008), who discussed how privileging dominant languages in schools causes imbalances in students' development.

5.1.3 The Struggle with Multilingualism: Too Much, Too Soon

Parents in Quetta live in a truly multilingual environment. Children are often exposed to three or more languages: their mother tongue at home, Urdu in their communities, and English in school. While many parents believe this multilingual exposure is good, they also shared that it can be overwhelming for young children especially when the teaching methods do not support effective language learning. This struggle is also visible in the sudden shift from Urdu to English in higher grades. Several parents said that their children faced "shock" when English was introduced in later classes, especially when it replaced Urdu completely. This confirms the concerns raised by researchers like Coleman (2010) and Mehmood et al. (2025), who noted that poor planning and lack of teacher training make language transitions difficult and harmful for students.

5.1.4 English and Confidence: A Social Reality

Many parents in the study mentioned that fluency in English builds a child's confidence not just in academics, but also in interviews, social situations, and general communication. This matches the findings of Shamim (2008) and Hanik et al. (2024), who noted that English fluency is often mistakenly equated with intelligence and capability. In fact, some parents reflected on their own educational struggles and expressed the desire to prepare their children better. One participant said that English suddenly appeared in the sixth grade and they were unable to understand anything a common experience in many government schools. This historical struggle shows how language gaps are passed down from one generation to the next, unless there is strong support from the education system.

5.1.5 Public vs. Private Schools: Language Divides Opportunity

Another major finding is the difference between private and government (public) schools in terms of language use and parental preference. Most parents preferred private schools, mainly because they offer English-medium instruction, better discipline, and more organized learning. Even though private schools are more expensive, parents were willing to make financial sacrifices, believing it would help their children succeed. This mirrors the literature (Andrabi, Das, & Khwaja, 2002; Shamim & Rashid, 2019), which shows that English-medium private schools in Pakistan cater to wealthier families and are seen as offering better quality education. In contrast, public schools are often Urdu-medium, under-resourced, and viewed as less effective especially in terms of language development. However, some parents did express trust in public schools and said they would prefer them if the system were improved.

5.1.6 Language Ideologies: Between Pride and Pressure

The study also revealed that language preferences are not just practical choices they are shaped by deeper social beliefs. Parents believe that English opens doors, gives confidence,

and signals intelligence. At the same time, they also feel sadness that their own languages are fading away. This conflict reflects the core of language ideologies. As Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) suggest, language choices are never neutral they reflect what society values and what it ignores. In Quetta, parents are navigating a complex world where English brings status but their home languages bring identity. Trying to hold on to both is a real emotional and educational challenge.

5.1.7 Language and Inequality: A Repeating Cycle

Lastly, the findings show that school choice and language are deeply connected to inequality. Wealthier parents have more access to English-medium schools and can support their children's learning through extra tuition or home help. On the other hand, parents with limited income have fewer options and often send their children to Urdu-medium public schools even if they know the future opportunities are limited. This confirms what many scholars (Rahman, 2005; Dearden, 2014) have said: language-based school choices reinforce social divides. Children from different economic backgrounds receive different kinds of education, mainly because of the language of instruction. This makes it harder to create an equal and inclusive education system, especially in regions like Balochistan.

5.2 Implications of the Study

The findings from this study have several important implications for parents, teachers, policymakers, and educational institutions, especially in multilingual regions like Quetta. The insights shared by parents help us understand the everyday challenges they face when choosing a school, and how deeply language affects not only learning but also identity, opportunity, and fairness.

5.2.1 For Parents: Balancing Dreams and Realities

This study shows that parents are deeply invested in their children's education. They want the best schools, and they believe English-medium education is the key to a better future. However, many parents also feel worried that their children struggle to understand lessons in English, especially in the early years. This creates a tension between long-term goals (economic success) and short-term realities (language comprehension).

Implication:

Parents need more guidance and support in making informed decisions about their children's education especially about when and how English should be introduced. School counseling sessions, parent workshops, and community meetings can help bridge this information gap.

5.2.2 For Teachers and Schools: Supporting Multilingual Learning

Teachers play a crucial role in how language is experienced in the classroom. The study revealed that when students are suddenly exposed to English without proper preparation, they often lose confidence or fall behind. Parents also noticed that schools rarely provide strong support in teaching multiple languages.

Implication:

Schools especially public ones must train teachers to handle multilingual classrooms. This includes improving teacher proficiency in English and helping them use effective strategies like code-switching and gradual language transition. Teaching in the mother tongue in the early grades could help children build stronger foundations, with English introduced more slowly and naturally.

5.2.3 For Education Policymakers: The Need for Clear Language Policy

One of the most common concerns raised by parents was the lack of a clear, consistent language policy in schools. Some parents want English instruction; others support Urdu or

regional languages. Most feel that the current system forces them to choose between identity and opportunity.

Implication:

Policymakers need to develop a balanced, multilingual education policy that includes English, Urdu, and regional languages. This will help children learn better and feel more connected to their identity, while also preparing them for the global world. Introducing mother tongue education in early grades, followed by gradual transition to Urdu and English, can make learning more effective and inclusive.

5.2.4 For Equity and Social Justice: Addressing Educational Inequality

The study highlights a major gap between families who can afford private English-medium schools and those who rely on government schools. Language has become a marker of class, creating unequal access to opportunities. Poorer families are often left behind because they cannot afford schools where English is taught well.

Implication:

To reduce inequality, the government must invest in improving the quality of English instruction in public schools. This includes better teacher training, updated teaching materials, and smaller class sizes. Ensuring that children from all backgrounds can learn English without neglecting their mother tongue will help bridge the social and economic divide.

5.2.5 For Curriculum Developers: Creating Culturally Inclusive Textbooks

Many parents felt that their mother tongue and culture are ignored in the classroom. While English is important, it should not come at the cost of erasing a child's linguistic and cultural roots.

Implication:

Curriculum designers should include stories, lessons, and examples from local languages and cultures. Textbooks that reflect a child's home language and environment can make learning more engaging and meaningful. This will also help children feel proud of their identity, which strengthens their confidence and motivation.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and the insights shared by parents, the following recommendations are suggested for improving language-related school policies, teaching practices, and parental engagement especially in multilingual regions like Quetta.

5.3.1 Promote Multilingual Education

Most parents emphasized that their children should be taught multiple languages, not just English. They valued the mother tongue for understanding, Urdu for national connection, and English for global opportunities. A balanced multilingual approach can therefore support both comprehension and competitiveness.

For example, Participant I shared:

> *"Balochi is our mother tongue, but our children can go anywhere in the world. So they should be taught English and Urdu as well."*

This shows parents want an education system that respects local identity while preparing students for a global world. Schools in Balochistan should therefore gradually introduce English and Urdu alongside regional languages like Brahui, Pashto, and Balochi. This approach will help children learn naturally in early grades while developing proficiency in national and international languages later on.

5.3.2 Strengthen Teacher Training

Several parents highlighted the importance of teacher quality and communication. They felt that many teachers, especially in government schools, struggle to engage students effectively in English or even Urdu.

Participant F commented:

> *"In government schools, teachers don't give much time to students. In private schools, teachers speak English more confidently, so students also learn quickly."*

This finding suggests a strong need for teacher training programs that focus on language proficiency, classroom communication, and multilingual teaching strategies. Teachers should be trained to make language learning more interactive, enjoyable, and inclusive — regardless of the language used. Workshops and refresher courses should be regularly conducted to build teachers' confidence in both English and regional languages, ensuring that language does not become a barrier to learning.

5.3.3 Develop Educational Materials in Local Languages

Many participants expressed that children learn better when taught in a language they understand, but the lack of textbooks and materials in regional languages makes it difficult.

As Participant A mentioned:

> *"If children are taught in their mother tongue, they can understand better, but there are no proper books or materials in our local languages."*

This highlights the urgent need to develop textbooks, storybooks, and learning aids in regional languages such as Balochi, Brahui, and Pashto, especially for early primary grades. When children first learn to read and write in a familiar language, their confidence increases and their transition to Urdu or English becomes smoother. Government education departments and language boards should collaborate with local educators, writers, and linguistic experts to create quality materials that are culturally relevant and engaging.

5.3.4 Raise Awareness Among Parents

Many parents linked success only to English, which reflects a strong language ideology that values one language over others. For instance, Participant B said:

> *"If a child doesn't know English, they will fail. Everything today is in English."*

This shows a need for public awareness campaigns and parental workshops to help parents understand the value of multilingual education. Awareness programs can explain that learning in the mother tongue supports understanding, while English can be gradually developed over time. By educating parents about these benefits, schools can help reduce the pressure of "English-only" schooling and encourage families to support a more balanced language policy that values both local and global languages.

5.3.5 Improve the Quality of Government Schools

Some participants expressed strong support for government schools due to their experienced teachers, but many others criticized their infrastructure, discipline, and lack of English exposure.

Participant D, who supported public education, said:

> *"I prefer government schools because the teachers there are qualified and selected through a proper commission."*

However, Participant F disagreed:

> *"Government schools don't provide enough attention or facilities. Private schools at least ensure discipline and communication in English."*

These contrasting opinions indicate that parents still trust government schools' teaching ability, but expect better facilities and motivation from teachers.

The government should therefore:

- Upgrade classrooms and facilities, especially in urban Balochistan.
- Ensure regular teacher attendance and monitoring.
- Introduce English-speaking clubs and language activities within public schools.
- Encourage community involvement to improve accountability.

Improving public schools will help reduce the gap between private and government education, and make parents feel confident in choosing affordable public options.

5.3.6 Integrate Cultural and Linguistic Identity in Curriculum

Several parents showed emotional attachment to their cultural roots. They wanted their children to respect their native languages and traditions, even while learning English.

Participant D said:

> *"A child feels comfortable in the language they know. They can express themselves easily in their own language."*

This indicates that education should not only focus on academic excellence but also promote cultural pride and linguistic identity. Schools should include regional stories, folk songs, and poetry in early education to make learning more relatable and enjoyable. Celebrating Language and Culture Days in schools can also encourage students to speak their local languages proudly, strengthening both identity and inclusion.

5.3.7 Strengthen Communication Between Schools and Parents

A few participants mentioned that parents are often unaware of school policies or language plans. Regular parent-teacher meetings can help parents understand how languages are taught and what they can do at home to support learning.

For example, Participant E shared:

> *"Parents should also be part of their child's language learning. If schools guide us properly, we can help at home too."*

Schools should thus adopt transparent communication strategies such as newsletters, meetings, and community workshops to build stronger partnerships with parents. This will ensure that both schools and families share the same language goals for children.

5.3.8 Conduct Further Research

Finally, more studies should be carried out in other districts of Balochistan to explore whether parents in rural areas hold similar or different beliefs about language and school choice. It would also be useful to study the views of teachers and students to gain a complete picture of how language functions in education. Such research can guide policy development and curriculum reform by highlighting real experiences from diverse linguistic communities across the province.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1 Summary of the Study

This study set out to explore a topic that many families in Balochistan think about deeply but don't often talk about openly: How does the language used in schools influence parents when they choose where to send their children? In a place like Quetta, where people speak many different languages including Balochi, Pashto, Brahui, Urdu, and English this is not a simple question.

The research focused on understanding parents' thoughts, feelings, and concerns about the language of instruction used in public and private schools. Through nine in-depth interviews with parents from different linguistic, educational, and economic backgrounds, the study collected personal stories that reflect real-life experiences and decisions.

The study had two main goals:

1. To find out how the language of instruction affects school choice.

2. To understand what parents believe about the role of language in their children's academic success and future opportunities.

The research was guided by the theory of language ideologies, which looks at how people attach different meanings and values to certain languages. For example, many people in Quetta see English as a "success language" something that leads to better jobs, scholarships, and respect. On the other hand, regional languages like Brahui or Balochi are seen as part of one's identity and culture, but not very useful in formal education or professional life.

To explore these ideas, the researcher used a qualitative method meaning the focus was on listening carefully to parents' voices rather than collecting numbers. The interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, which helped identify five main themes:

1. The importance of school environment and reputation.
2. Language as a deciding factor in school choice.
3. English as a symbol of confidence and opportunity.
4. Emotional attachment to the mother tongue.
5. The dream of multilingual education and the challenges in making it happen.

Parents expressed both hope and worry. They hoped for a better future for their children through English-medium education, but also worried about their children losing touch with their mother tongue, struggling in school due to language barriers, or feeling pressured in a system that doesn't support them fully.

The study found that school choice is not just about fees or location it’s about language, identity, future dreams, and everyday realities. Parents make difficult decisions, often balancing what they can afford with what they believe will give their children the best chance to succeed in life.

6.2 Conclusion

This study explored how language plays a major role in school selection among parents in Quetta, Balochistan. It brought out real stories and honest concerns from parents who are doing their best to make the right choices for their children's future. These parents are not just thinking about which school is closest or cheapest they are thinking about what language their children will learn in, and what that means for their confidence, performance, identity, and career opportunities.

One of the strongest conclusions from this research is that **English is seen as the key to success**. Almost all parents, regardless of income or education level, believed that knowing English would open more doors for their children to better jobs, higher education, and respect in society. Because of this belief, many parents prefer private schools, even when it’s

financially difficult. English is not just a subject to them it's a symbol of status and a passport to opportunity.

At the same time, parents also **value their mother tongues** like Balochi, Pashto, Brahui, and feel sad that these languages are being left behind. They believe children understand better in their home language, especially in the early years. But the system does not offer strong support for mother-tongue education. Most schools teach in Urdu or English, leaving regional languages out of the picture.

The study also showed that **public schools are losing trust**, mainly because of weak English instruction, poor school environments, and lack of resources. Some parents still support public schools and hope they can be improved but many feel forced to choose private schools, even when they can barely afford it.

What becomes clear is that parents are caught between two worlds one where they want their children to stay connected to their language and culture, and another where they want them to succeed in a competitive, English-dominated system. This is not an easy balance. Parents feel the pressure, and children often carry the burden.

In the end, this study reminds us that **language is not just a classroom issue** it is deeply connected to **identity, opportunity, culture, and fairness**. For education in Balochistan to become truly inclusive and effective, there needs to be a better balance one where all languages are valued, and all children, no matter their background, have the chance to learn, grow, and succeed.

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Appendix-A

Interview Protocol

Study Title: **Parental Concerns and The Role of Language as A Medium of Instruction in School Selection: A Study of Government and Private Schools**

Name _____ (optional)

Age _____

Gender _____

Occupation _____

Educational Level _____

Language Spoken at home_____

Introduction for Participants:

"Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. We are conducting a study to understand how parents in Quetta make school choices based on the language as medium of instruction. Your answers will help explore the role of language in education. This is not a test there are no right or wrong answers. Everything you share will remain confidential."

Main Interview Questions:

1. How did you decide which school to send your child to? (Probe: What were the most important factors?)
2. Did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, or regional language) influence your choice? How?
3. Do you believe that learning in English gives better opportunities in the future? Why or why not?

4. Do you think language affects your child's academic performance or confidence? In what way?
5. What language did you study in during your own school years? How did it affect your learning? (For educated parents)
6. Which school do you prefer in language learning private or government schools? Why?
7. What advice would you give to other parents about choosing a school based on language?
8. Would you send your child to a school that teaches in your mother tongue only? Why or why not?
9. What do you think is the best language for early education in a multilingual place like Quetta?
10. If the government improves Urdu-medium schools, would you still prefer English-medium? Why or why not?
11. Have you faced any challenges related to language in your child's education? Can you share an example?
12. What kind of future do you imagine for your child based on the language they are learning in?

Closing Remarks:

Thank you for your time and honest responses. Your input is very valuable and will help in understanding how language affects school decisions in Quetta.

Appendix-B

Interviews

Participant A: Female

Interviewer (A)

Respondent (B)

A: Assalamualaikum, Baji. Thank you very much for giving us your time and participating in our research. First of all, I want to make it clear that your answers will remain confidential and will only be used for academic purposes. Our research topic is about the concerns parents have when enrolling their children in school, what factors influence them, and what role language plays. Now, I will ask you some personal questions — it's completely your choice whether or not you want to answer them.

First, can you tell me your name?

B: I don't want to share my name (Unknown).

A: That's absolutely fine. What is your age?

B: I am 35 years old.

A: What is your occupation?

B: I'm a housewife.

A: What is your education level and what language do you speak?

B: I haven't studied at all. And my language is Brahui.

A: Now we'll move on to the main questions. Our first question is:

How did you decide which school to send your child to?

(Probe: What were the most important factors?)

B: I enrolled my eldest daughter in a government school because only girls study there — it's a girls-only school, and there are no boys. I enrolled my other two daughters in a nearby government school because it's close to home and they are still young.

A: Did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, or regional language) influence your choice? How?

B: Nowadays, government schools teach in both English and Urdu, and the education is good. Earlier they only taught in Urdu, but now they also teach in English. Government schools are now English medium too, which is why they are better.

A: Do you believe that learning in English gives better opportunities in the future? Why or why not?

B: Of course. Studying in English can give children better opportunities in the future.

A: Do you think language affects your child's academic performance or confidence? In what way?

B: Definitely. If children are taught in their mother tongue, they can understand better, which greatly affects their academic performance.

A: Which school do you prefer in language learning private or government schools? Why?

B: What did you say?

A: I asked, would you prefer a school (government or private) based on the language used there?

B: For me, both government and private schools are the same. It depends on the child — if they work hard, they can succeed in either school. Government school teachers are good too.

A: What advice would you give to other parents about choosing a school for their children?

B: I would advise them that government schools are better than private ones. If your child wants to learn, they can study well in government schools too.

A: What would you say about language in this context?

B: I believe that when children are young, we should try to teach them in their mother tongue first.

A: Would you send your child to a school where teachers teach in your mother tongue? For example, since you speak Brahui, would you want your children to be taught in Brahui?

B: If there was a school in the mother tongue, it would be better. Children understand faster at a young age when taught in their own language. It's more effective.

A: What do you think is the best language for early education in a multilingual place like Quetta?

B: Obviously, if someone speaks Pashto, they won't understand Brahui, and a Brahui speaker won't understand Pashto. So instead of regional languages, Urdu is a better option because all children can understand it.

A: What if the government improves Urdu medium schools — would you then prefer Urdu medium over English medium?

B: Obviously, I would prefer Urdu medium because it is spoken in our region and throughout Pakistan. But English is spoken abroad and is important for business, so I would also give importance to English. If I think about my child's future, I would want them to study in English so they can understand and communicate well.

A: Whatever language your child is currently studying in — Brahui, Urdu, or English — what kind of future do you imagine for them?

B: Right now, they are studying. I imagine that they will become teachers or high-ranking officers one day.

A: That's wonderful — you have good hopes for their future.

B: Yes.

A: Thank you very much, Baji. That was all from our side. Thank you again for your time, for trusting us, and for being a part of our research.

B: Thank you as well for taking my responses and including me in your research.

Participant B: Female

A: Asslamualaikum Ma'am!

B: W\Salam

A: We are conducting a research. We are collecting data through interviews. Your responses will remain confidential and will not be shared elsewhere. We will write about them in our research without mentioning your name unless you allow it. Your answers will help us a lot. Would you like to share your name? If at any point you do not wish to answer a question, you may skip it.

A: What is your name?

B: My name is Mahzaib Saif.

A: Your age?

B: 35

A: Occupation?

B: Housewife

A: What is your qualification?

B: Master's degree

A: What language do you speak at home?

B: Brahui — it is my mother tongue.

A: How did you decide which school to send your child to? (Probe: What were the most important factors?)

B: First, we parent consider if the school environment is good, whether the teachers and principal are good, and if the school building is proper — so the children feel interested in going there. The school should have good extracurricular activities. We also consider how close the school is to our home — it should be nearby so it's not difficult for us. The school should also be in a safe location. Based on all this, we decide to send our child to that school.

A: Did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, or regional language) influence your choice? How?

B: Yes, it matters. If we are putting our child in an English-medium school, our priority is that the child learns something and starts using the same language at home and school. But here, even in most private schools, Urdu is mostly used because children can't learn quickly. Even teachers can't push them too much toward language learning. By fifth or sixth grade, children understand they're in an English-medium school, so they start shifting toward English.

A: Do you believe that learning English will provide better opportunities for your child in the future?

B: Yes, I believe that. That's why we put our children in private schools. Everything today — especially social media — is in English. If a child doesn't know English, they will fail. Their education would not benefit them.

Do you believe that the language can affect your child's academic performance and confidence? Does language help build child's confidence?

B: Yes, absolutely. Children first learn Urdu, and when they study any language — whether English or Urdu — it builds their confidence. The language they are studying in helps increase their confidence.

A: What language did you study in during your own school years? How did it affect your learning?

B: I studied in an Urdu-medium school. English was introduced after grade six. We faced a lot of difficulties because until grade five there was no English — not even any English books. Suddenly, in sixth grade, English began, and it was hard to understand things. That's why we now want our children to learn both English and Urdu from the beginning.

A: Would you prefer a private or an Urdu-medium (government) school for your child? Why?

B: Private schools are better. We admitted our child into a private school so that they have a good foundation. If the foundation is in English, then their English will continue throughout their education. If it's an Urdu-medium school, it becomes hard for the child to suddenly shift from Urdu to English later.

A: What advice would you give to other parents about choosing a school for their children?

I would advise all parents that whether it's an English-medium or Urdu-medium school, the environment must be good. The educational system should be strong, and most importantly, the language system must be good. If both Urdu and English are taught together, the child will succeed faster.

A: Would you send your child to a school where only the mother tongue is taught? Why or why not?

B: All mothers want their children to learn their mother tongue first. But unfortunately, in our education system, the mother tongue has no importance. Our mother tongue is Brahui, and we want to promote it, but in our country it has no value. All subjects are taught in Urdu and English. Mother tongue is very important, but we try to ensure that our child learns the language used in school more.

A: What do you think is the best language for early education in a multilingual place like Quetta?

B: Children's early education usually starts in Urdu, then shifts to English. If subjects continue in this pattern, it will be difficult. But if a child is interested in learning and speaking multiple languages, then it's a very good thing.

A: If the government improves Urdu-medium schools, will you still prefer English-medium private schools?

B: If the government supports us properly, then yes — we will prefer government schools. We'll send our children there because government school teachers are more experienced compared to private school teachers. Also, there are many government schools. Parents cannot afford to pay monthly fees for 4–5 children at once. It's very hard for them. If the government provides good opportunities, we'll be very thankful.

A: What kind of future do you imagine for your child, considering the language they are being educated in?

B: We just want our child to have a bright future. What we want for them might not be what they want. But as parents, it is our duty to work hard for our children so that their foundation is strong and they don't face problems in the future. That's why we are educating them in both Urdu and English — it will improve their skills and help them get a good job.

A: Thank you very much, Ma'am, for your time and responses.

B: You are welcome.

Participant C: Male

Interviewer (A):

A: Assalam-o-Alaikum sir. We are here as part of our research. We are conducting some interviews and collecting data. If you allow, we would like to record your responses.

B: No issue, beta. Go ahead.

A: Sir, your responses will be kept confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

B: Okay, beta. That's fine.

A: Sir, we are students of Linguistics, and our research topic is: Parental Concerns and the Role of Language as a Medium of Instruction in School Selection: A Study of Government and Private Schools. In simple words, we are exploring what concerns parents have when choosing schools for their children and what factors influence their decisions.

Our first question is: How did you decide which school to send your child to? (Probe: What were the most important factors?)

B: Look beta, the mother tongue is the language in which a child learns most effectively. There are no major difficulties in learning through it. Unfortunately, in our country, the mother tongue has never been taken seriously as a tool for learning or education. In most of our institutions and especially schools, the mother tongue is not even part of the curriculum. So, even thinking about it feels pointless.

Now, coming to English and Urdu — nowadays, everyone believes that someone who knows English is the most capable person, whereas English is just a tool for communication.

As a parent, my main concern was which school can provide the best education for my child — whether in science or other areas. My basic thinking is that the school should have a strong focus on mathematics, because if a child is good at math, he can succeed in any field.

A: Sir, Did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, or regional language) influence your choice? How?

B: Definitely, it influenced me, because globally, the language of science is English. So, in that sense, language did influence my decision.

A: Do you believe that learning in English gives better opportunities in the future? Why or why not?

B: Again, the point is that the literature available to us and the content used in advancing education is all in English. Top universities around the world use English — you won't find Arabic, Brahui, or other regional languages there.

Also, most medicines and scientific terms are in English. So, I believe that English can offer my child more opportunities.

A: Do you think language affects your child's academic performance or confidence? In what way?

B: That’s a very good question. We all believe that if a child knows English well, he will be more confident in school. A child who understands English can comprehend texts better. So yes, language affects a child's academic performance.

A: What language did you study in during your own school years? How did it affect your learning?

B: During my time, private schools were not common — government schools were more prevalent.

We studied in Urdu and communicated in local languages among ourselves. English was introduced in 6th grade.

A: So sir, how did it affect your learning?

B: It did have an effect back then, and it still does. For example, I remember our teacher mispronounced the word “Headache” as “Headaach.” I learned it that way. When I used that pronunciation in college, everyone laughed at me. So, language has a strong impact.

A: Which school do you prefer for language learning — private or government schools? Why?

B: That’s a very important question!

Government school teachers are educated and experienced, but the question is — how many are actually present? Many government schools are closed. You probably know that in Quetta city alone, around 50–60 government schools are non-functional. So how can I send my child to a closed school?

That’s why private schools have turned education into a business, and they’re providing more input.

So, I would prefer a private school.

A: What advice would you give to other parents about choosing a school based on language?

B: Actually, we shouldn't be advising parents — we should be advising the government.

I’ll divide this into two parts:

First, the government should consider what language they are promoting and how it will affect children’s futures.

Second, I would tell parents that although some government schools provide good education, generally it is observed and researched that they lack facilities. So, I would say — choose schools that have good textbooks.

A: Would you send your child to a school that teaches only in your mother tongue? Why or why not?

B: Mother tongue is very important. If the government announces a policy that all science-related books and texts will be translated into the local language and taught that way — then

there's no better system. Because a child learns much better in their mother tongue. But the government does not promote local languages.

A: What do you think is the best language for early education in a multilingual place like Quetta?

B: For early education, the best language is definitely the mother tongue. But the question is: are we serious about mother tongues? Are we ready to translate our books and train our teachers? Learning in the mother tongue is much easier; learning in another language is much harder.

A: So sir, this weakness is on the part of the government?

B: Absolutely. It's the government's responsibility because they make the policies.

A: If the government improves Urdu-medium schools, would you still prefer English-medium? Why or why not?

B: If Supreme Court decisions are written in English, who is going to accept only Urdu-medium?

So obviously, English medium remains preferable.

A: Sir, our last question is: What kind of future do you imagine for your child based on the language they are learning in?

B: First of all, as a developing country, we admit that we are far behind, and the reason is our current learning style and pedagogy. Yes, I want my child to build a good career.

Let me add one more point:

A person who knows English can hide many flaws — maybe because we were a colony once.

So, we too try to learn the language of our rulers.

A: Thank you, sir, for your time and valuable responses.

Participant D: Male

A: Asslamu alikum sir

B: Wa Alaikum Assalam.

A: Sir, we are conducting a research and our study is on parental concerns and the role of language as medium of instruction in school selection: A study of public and private schools. Before we start, I assure you that the data you provide will be kept private. During the interview, you can skip any question if you don't want to answer, and you can also withdraw anytime.

B: Okay.

A: What is your name?

B: My name is Dr. Liaqat Sani

A: What is your age?

B: I am 44.

A: What about your education level

B: I am post-doc

A: Which language do you speak at home?

B: At home we speak mostly Brahui language and my Mrs. Speaks Dehwari languge too.

A: Now we will move towards the questions, how did you decide which school to send your child to? (Probe: What were the most important factors?)

B: Ahh… pause. Obviously, I am connected with the university, so I want my child to study where the syllabus is practical. I want my child to stay away from rote learning. I want a school based on modern technology. I want my child to start learning AI-related things from the beginning. So that's why I want my child to attend such a school.

A: Did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, or regional language) influence your choice? How?

B: This is a very important issue. We have discussed it too, and there are both problems and solutions. Balochistan is a multilingual region. Still, at the government level, there is no clear language policy. In government schools, Urdu is the medium of instruction. Usually, after second or third grade, English is introduced. When I studied, or in schools of our age, English was introduced from sixth class, and even Arabic was taught till eighth grade. So we studied in three languages. But we had difficulties with language, especially English. If we had learned English properly, we would have understood English subjects better. I could only understand science subjects well, but other subjects taught in Urdu or English were harder. The medium of instruction should be the child's mother tongue. This is a universal truth — a child learns best in their mother tongue. I will share a story: In a place, a student who learned in mother tongue had great rankings even he was not highly qualified but on the other hand a

second language student who was highly qualified but had the lowest rankings in terms of education. This shows nature. We can learn naturally in the language we think in. I prefer mother tongue as the medium of instruction.

A: Do you believe that learning in English gives better opportunities in the future? Why or why not?

B: I have also lived abroad. Recently, I went to Japan. There, they only prefer their own language. Even university professors do not rely much on English. English is taught in their schools, but it is not given so much importance. In Pakistan, we assume English is very important and give it high preference. If you speak more English, people consider you educated, which is not necessarily true. As a student of linguistics, I think it is foolish to think things are easier only in English and not in our own language. English has its importance, but we have given it too much value and considered our own languages useless. Some think English is the language of employment, which is a misconception. Nowadays, you can translate anything into any language with technology. English is a base language in machine translation because of its global use.

A: Do you think language affects your child's academic performance or confidence? In what way?

B: Pause. Definitely, besides language, there are other factors affecting academic performance. A child feels comfortable in the language they know. A child who studies in their own language can express themselves more easily compared to one who struggles with a foreign language. I can share my feelings easily in my own language. Children learn better in their mother tongue.

A: What language did you study in during your own school years? How did it affect your learning?

B: Pause. As far as I know, I studied in a government school. From sixth class, English was introduced to us. I'll share a story — when we were in third class, the teacher would teach lessons in Urdu and then translate them into Brahui. That helped us remember the themes. But we had a language barrier. If we had been taught in our own language from the beginning, I might not be sitting here today in this position. Urdu was hard for us to understand; we learned it ourselves. This was in the 90s.

A: Which school do you prefer in language learning private or Public schools? Why?

B: Look, I am talking about 2025. I prefer government schools because the human resources there are far better than private schools. Even a teacher with just an FSC (intermediate) qualification is employed in private schools, but in public schools the selection is done through a commission and a proper mechanism. I prefer public teachers over private school teachers, many of whom have no training. So I will prefer public schools over private schools.

A: What advice would you give to other parents about choosing a school based on language?

B: First, put your children in schools where the syllabus encourages critical thinking and analytical skills. Do not force children into rote learning. If children are taught concepts through good methods and technology they will be skillful persons in future, so put them in such schools. Try to choose a school where the child can feel comfortable. If possible, enroll your child in a school where their mother tongue is used or the language they understand well. If at home a child speaks one language, plays in another language in the street, and in schools they learn a third language like English, it creates difficulties. Education should be given in one language clearly. Today, we hardly produce any scientists because children find it hard to understand basic subjects properly. If we teach them with understanding, it will solve many problems.

A: What do you think is the best language for early education in a multilingual place like Quetta?

B: Early education should be in the mother tongue, right? But what if later on the child faces Urdu and English? Our syllabus is in Urdu or English. How can we then make the child understand?

A: Yes, mother tongue, sir. How can this happen if later the child must learn Urdu or English?

B: Now AI has come, so it's not a problem. AI can translate anything. Language is about understanding. A child understands concepts better in the language of their nature — the mother tongue. If the child understands concepts well, then learning other languages won't be difficult. AI can help with this. In a few years, when your research is done, many new inventions will happen. Even now, your phone has voice-to-text and translation. This problem is solved. It's not really a language barrier anymore. The important thing is what the child is learning and whether they understand it properly.

Urdu is still there. Our constitution says the official language is Urdu. Unfortunately, many English centers are also running. English has grown rapidly. The commissions and policies seem disconnected from nature. We don't have our own ideas here. We copy others blindly, like following the car lights blindly at night. The real matter is understanding. Urdu is already here. Those who know English are considered educated and respected. We have misunderstood language.

I personally prefer Urdu because if I speak Urdu, thousands can understand me. If I speak English, not only do I feel uncomfortable, fewer people will understand me. I want my language to be understood by many, so I prefer the language with the most listeners — Urdu here. Also, why not have Balochi, Pashto, Urdu, Brahui all together? I don't call them regional languages; I call them national languages. People call them regional because they think Urdu will dominate, or for political reasons. I don't want politics over language. Urdu is not the language of any one nation; neither is Brahui, Balochi, Pashto, or Persian.

A: What kind of future do you imagine for your child based on the language they are learning in?

B: I want my child to become a good human being. My parents probably never studied a single class. But I have a postdoc. I might be the first in my whole tribe. I come from a very poor family. From KG to 10th grade, I didn't even know what Pocket money is. If I had 3000 rupees a month for tuition, I might have done better. I'm thankful, but I might have been in a different place otherwise. I might have had more qualities, but poverty stopped me.

I don't just want my children to study, I want them to be good humans. If they study in good schools but become monsters, that's not a future. No one should feel fear from my children in terms of harm. That is a bright future. Jobs will not be a problem. I am the first in my family to get a job. Before that, I survived without a job for ten years. No one gave me pocket money. Allah made a way for me. I probably wore one uniform for two years. No matter how high my position is, I remember where I came from. I still dream of those days. I am proud of myself. I was born in a poor family but had some humanity.

A: Sir, thank you so much for your honest responses.

B: welcome.

Participant E: Female

A: Assalam Waalaikum

B: Walikum Salam

A: Ma'am, we are conducting an interview for our research, and your answers are very important to us. Our research is about parental concerns regarding how they choose a school for their children, what role language plays in school selection, and what factors influence them. Ma'am, we will write down your answers as they are, and your recording and personal information will all be kept confidential. You can also skip any question you wish to.

A: What is your name? If you would like to share.

B: My name is Rabbia Nazeer, and I will try my best to answer all your questions accurately based on my knowledge and experience. Is that okay?

A: Thank you, ma'am. Ma'am, what is your education level and occupation?

B: My education is MS in Computer Sciences, and my occupation is CMS Functional Lead. I am in grade 17 at the institute where I work, (BUITEMS).

A: Alright, ma'am, so we will continue with our questions. The first question is: How did you decide which school to send your child to? What were the most important factors?

B: The most important factor, first of all, is that the school where I get my child admitted should have a good reputation. When I got my daughter admitted, the first thing I considered was that I am a working woman, so I shouldn't have issues with pick and drop because my husband and I work at the same institution. We both tried to find a school near our workplace. Besides that, the factors I look at are the class size, which should be small so that every teacher can give proper time to each student. I have also noticed that good schools like City School, Beaconhouse, or Army schools are overcrowded. I feel that class size plays a very big role in a child's understanding and learning. The smaller the class size, the better a child will understand the teacher, and the teachers will also be able to give more time. So, for me, the biggest factor is this.

A: Did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, regional language) influence your choice? How?

B: Absolutely, language is the most important thing because we communicate through language. As Brahui people, our effort is to teach our child our language and also Urdu for sure. They will communicate with us in our language, but the child should also know Urdu so they can communicate when they go to school. However, English is also necessary. But I feel that a child learns English when they go to school. So, mother tongue, Urdu, and English – these three languages a child must know, and a child can also learn because at a young age, a child can easily pick up not just three but many languages.

A: So, did the English language influence you to get your daughter admitted to that school?

B: No, the school where I got her admitted doesn't fully follow English. I think I didn't consider language that much, and language didn't influence me. I looked at only a few factors that influenced me, and then I got my child admitted.

A: Do you believe that learning in English gives better opportunities in the future? Why or why not?

B: Absolutely, that's why. Because when I got admission in BS, there were students with us who understood everything, the teacher's entire lecture, but when they wrote in the paper, they would say that they know everything in Urdu, but they cannot write those things in English. So, the biggest thing is that if one has proper English language skills, whether it's speaking, understanding, or writing, then such students don't face much problem when the language is there.

A: Do you think language affects your child's academic performance or confidence?

B: It fully influences and impacts it. That's why, because in lower classes, there might not be that much issue, but when children go to higher classes, it becomes difficult. Even the textbooks we have, whether it's science, English, or social studies, all the books gradually move towards English. So, I feel that it is very important for a child to know the English language. The more fluent a child is, the more easily they will understand the textbooks and all their contents, whether it's university or school; language is necessary. I see in BS, when students come to BS, those who have good English or good vocabulary and a good base attempt the paper very easily, but if the language is weak, they cannot even attempt the paper. I mean, I have experienced this myself with my own students in my own class who are very bright but cannot attempt the paper properly due to language.

A: What language did you study in during your own school years? How did it affect your learning?

B: I myself studied in an English medium school, so mostly our teachers communicated in English, and Urdu wasn't that much allowed either. I received my education from Army Public School from nursery to matric, so our medium of communication was English. So, I feel that because of this, I performed better in college and university, just because I had an understanding of the English language, and my basics were clear.

A: Which school do you prefer in language learning private or government schools? Why?

B: Private, obviously.

A: What is the reason, ma'am?

B: The reason is that it's not followed in government schools. In private schools, in some schools, a little English and a little Urdu are spoken, or in City School or Beaconhouse, they speak fully in English, in Army schools. But in government schools, I have noticed that mostly communication is in Urdu, so that's why I prefer private schools.

A: What advice would you give to other parents about choosing a school based on language?

B: Based on language, ah! I would prefer where English is used properly for communication. I looked at other factors besides language when admitting my child, but when other parents choose, they should choose based on language because language plays a very big role, a very important role, because your entire future, your matric, FSC, or your BS, Masters, all of this depends on your language. And if your English language is strong, then all the textbooks and course content ahead will be in English, so in this way, language plays a very big role.

A: Would you send your child to a school that teaches in your mother tongue only? Why or why not?

B: Mother tongue?

A: Yes, means the medium of instruction is your mother tongue.

B: No, I would not prefer that. I would see in what language the books or content will be in the future, so obviously, there are no books in the mother tongue, not even in Urdu, so I would prefer English. I would choose a school where English is more preferred.

A: What do you think is the best language for early education in a multilingual place like Quetta?

B: For early education, I would prefer English, but then again, like in our home, we speak Brahui, and my preference is also that the child should know their language, secondly Urdu, and thirdly they should know English so that they can compete in the future. For understanding, knowing English is also necessary, but I said at the beginning that at this age, a child can learn any language, so the child should know their mother tongue, Urdu, and English as well.

A: if the government improves Urdu medium schools, would you still prefer English medium schools?

B: I would prefer English medium schools because if the books are changed from English to Urdu, then I would prefer Urdu, but the content ahead, I would prefer that language only.

A: Ma'am, our last question is: What kind of future do you imagine for your child based on the language they are learning in?

B: Well, obviously, their content is in English, and my effort is to communicate in English with my school-going child at home as well because the child fully knows their language, they also know Urdu, but now I try to communicate with them in English so that their learning becomes even better in the future, and there is improvement in the English language.

A: Alright! Thank you so much, ma'am, for giving your time and response. Allah Hafiz (May God protect you).

Participant F: Male

A: Sir, we would like to interview you for our research. First of all, thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us. Our research title is Parental Concerns and the Role of Language as a Medium of Instruction in School Selection. We're studying both government and private schools. So, we want to explore what concerns parents have when choosing a school for their children, and what role language plays in that.

Let's begin with a few personal questions. Sir, what's your name?

B: My name is Muhammad Mohsin.

A: Your age?

B: Is that necessary? I mean, if it's not required...

A: Only if you're comfortable.

B: Let's say around 28.

A: And your occupation?

B: I'm a lecturer.

A: Your education level?

B: I have a Master's degree (MSc).

A: What language do you speak at home?

B: At home, we mostly speak Pashto.

A: How did you decide which school to send your child to? What were the most important factors?

B: Definitely, as a parent, the first thing that comes to mind is to enroll your children in a good school so they can have a bright future. My first preference was definitely a school where English is used. Why English? Because nowadays, we all know it's a global language, and most opportunities—whether competitive exams or job interviews—require good English skills. So that's why I decided that if I ever enrolled my child in a school, it had to be an English-medium school.

A: Did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, or regional language) influence your choice? How?

B: Of course, being a linguist, I do prefer regional languages. But when it comes to our society or Pakistan as a whole, we are a third-world country, and we've been colonized—English has been imposed on us. So, in that context, I still prefer English as the best option.

A: Do you believe that learning in English gives better opportunities in the future? Why or why not?

B: Well, as I said before, today people with good English skills are preferred. For example, take the CSS exam—the first paper is an essay. Now, whoever has strong English will be the one to succeed. It's not just about the essay; there are 12 papers in total, and if someone answers them well in English, they are more likely to succeed. That's why I prioritize English.

And I'd also like to share from my personal experience—wherever I've gone for interviews or where I've faced rejection, it was often because my focus was split between Urdu and English. The ones who were fluent in English were always preferred.

A: Do you think language affects your child's academic performance or confidence? In what way?

B: If we look at our multicultural context, children don't speak just one language at home. If a child learns in their mother tongue, they'll understand things much better than in English. Since English isn't our native language, the concepts we were taught in school were mostly memorized. Whether it was numerical in math or experiments in biology—we crammed it all without truly understanding what was happening. So I believe education in regional languages is more effective. For example, if a classroom has Pashto, Balochi, Brahui, and Persian-speaking students, then there should be a mechanism where each student is taught in their own language. That would be more beneficial.

A: What language did you study in during your own school years? How did it affect your learning?

B: As Pashto speakers, we learn Pashto around age three. Then we're put into school, where we're introduced to an alien language—Urdu, which is the national language. While still learning Urdu, we're introduced to yet another foreign language—English. So for a child, this becomes a huge burden.

As I said, if education is in the mother tongue, it's far more effective. Look at English-speaking countries—they're ahead in technology and various fields because their education is in their own language. If we had education in our own languages, we could also compete globally.

A: In the context of Pakistan, particularly Quetta, where there are both government and private schools, which do you think is better when it comes to language learning?

B: Well, based on my experience, especially in Balochistan and Quetta, government school infrastructure is not on par with private schools. Also, in government schools, teachers don't give much time to students. I've never seen a parent-teacher meeting in government schools, whereas in private schools they happen regularly. There are check-points every month, and teachers give feedback on students' progress. So in my opinion, private schools are better. But the issue with private schools is the fees. These days, they're so high that a common man earning 20, 25, 30, even 50 thousand rupees can't afford them.

A: What advice would you give to other parents about choosing a school based on language?

Respondent:

Definitely, I would advise parents to choose private schools.

A: Would you send your child to a school that teaches only in your mother tongue? Why or why not?

B: Of course, being a linguist, I would prefer that my children study in a language they speak at home. It's very difficult to explain something to a child in another language. Explaining in the mother tongue is both practically and theoretically easier than using national or international languages.

A: If the government improves Urdu-medium schools, would you still prefer English-medium? Why or why not?

B: Yes, definitely. If they modify the medium and include regional languages, I'd consider it.

A: My last question is, what are your expectations regarding your child's future based on the language they are studying in?

B: Honestly, I'd want my child to go to a top English-medium school—one that's among the best in Quetta. And I believe the language used in education has a major impact on their future.

A: Thank you, sir, for giving us your valuable time.

Participant G: Female

A: Assalam O Alaikum ma'am.

B: Wailakum Sallam

A: Ma'am, we need to conduct interviews with you for our research. Our research is about parental concerns with whose children are enrolled in schools. We are recording this, and we will take care of your privacy. All of this will be private, and your response will be added to our research as it is.

B: okay

A: Okay, ma'am, our first question is: How did you decide which school to send your child to? (Probe: What were the most important factors?)

B: Basically, being a parent, we see the outcome in an academic way. For the first time when I changed my kid's school, it was because he was too good at participating in many activities, but he was not good in his academics. So, the first and most important thing which parents see is the academic learning or academic outcome of that school.

A: Our second question is: Did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, or regional language) influence your choice? How?

B: Ah, I believe that English should be used in a school, but most probably this is not the implementation. Sometimes, English medium schools say it's an English medium school, but the teachers are not well-spoken in that language. They are not as they say, or they tell you it's an English medium school, but the teachers are not experienced enough.

A: Our third question is: Do you believe that learning in English gives better opportunities in the future? Why or why not?

B: Ah, I believe yes, because as English is a globalized language, so without English, it is not possible for a kid to succeed in their field or in every field. English is must because it's a globalized language.

A: Our fourth question is: Do you think language affects your child's academic performance or confidence? In what way?

B: If he is not good at the English language, he won't be able to give a good performance in school or in any field.

A: Our fifth question is: What language did you study in during your own school years? How did it affect your learning?

B: Ah, as I am from Conventarian schooling from the very beginning, everything, every subject, was taught in the English language. So, maybe that is the reason I expect the same from every school.

A: Our sixth question is: Which school do you prefer for language learning, private or government schools? Why?

B: I believe private schools are best because, in private schools, it's like most teachers use the English language. But in government schools, this is not the case. They don't use the English language, it's just in English class, or even the teacher is not well enough to train.

A: Seventh, we have: What advice would you give to other parents about choosing a school based on language?

B: Ah, see, it depends on the preferences of parents. We cannot tell anyone to choose a school; it depends on their own preferences, what they think about their kid.

A: Eighth question we have is: Would you send your child to a school that teaches in your mother tongue only? Why or why not?

B: No, I wouldn't want to because I believe the mother tongue can only be taught at home, not in schools.

A: Ninth question we have is: What do you think is the best language for early education in a multilingual place like Quetta?

B: Ah, I believe a kid can learn many languages at home because we belong to Balochistan, and it is rich in languages. So, I believe many languages can be learned at home, but the English language should be properly taught in schools.

A: 10th question is: If the government improves Urdu-medium schools, would you still prefer English-medium? Why or why not?

B: Yes, still I will prefer English medium because even if they improve, many subjects will still be taught in the Urdu language, and Urdu is not a globalized language.

A: Last question we have is: What kind of future do you imagine for your child based on the language they are learning in?

B: Sorry, I didn't get the question.

A: Okay. I said what kind of future do you imagine for your child based on the language they are learning in?

B: Whereas we are focusing more, as I am especially focusing more on the English language, so I believe if he is well enough trained in that language, if he can speak good English, it will really help him in every field.

Participant H: Female

A: Call (Ringing)

B: Hello?

A: Hello, Assalam O Alaikum!

B: Walaikum Assalam. How are you, dear?

A: I'm perfectly fine. How are you?

B: Alhamdulillah, I'm well too. Glad to hear you're fine.

A: Alhamdulillah. Ma'am, we're working on a research project, and I need to ask you a few questions. We've designed an interview protocol, and your responses will be really important for us.

B: Sure, go ahead.

A: If you allow, may I record this interview?

B: Yes, of course.

A: Ma'am, you can skip any question you're not comfortable with. Everything you say will remain confidential, and your answers will be used exactly as you say them in our research.

B: Okay, that's fine.

A: Ma'am, would you like to share your name?

B: Yes, Raheema Khan.

A: What's your age?

B: It's 40 plus.

A: What is your occupation?

B: I'm a lecturer.

A: And your education level?

B: I've completed my M.Phil.

A: What language do you use at home?

B: We speak Pashto at home.

A: Thank you, ma'am. Now we'll move on to the questions. I'll ask them in either Urdu or English — whichever you're comfortable with.

B: It's up to you. I'm comfortable with both.

A: Great, ma'am. So the first question is: how did you decide which school to send your child to? What were the most important factors?

B: (pauses) Actually, I made two major decisions for my children. Initially, I was looking for a school that offered Qur'anic and Islamic education, so I chose Dar-e-Arqam School for that reason. Later, after middle school, I realized their English wasn't strong enough, so I decided to switch schools. I moved my children to a school run by the Learning House system under City Management. This school has been operating for about 5–6 years. There were two main reasons for this decision. Firstly, no matter how much we claim to value our national language Urdu, at the end of the day, our business communication and official work is all in English. Because of this, our children fall behind since they lack strong English skills, especially in pronunciation and confidence. Secondly, I wanted them to pursue more advanced studies and research, to keep up with new technologies — even to study for O-Levels. These were the main reasons I had to make that change.

A: Sure, ma'am. Now moving to the second question — did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, or a regional language) influence your decision? How did it influence you?

B: (pauses) Well, it wasn't the primary influence, but yes, there were some strong points. The school was genuinely working hard. Their system, classroom conversations in both Urdu and English, and the fact that they hired highly qualified teachers — all of this played a role. Also, they had internal systems to ensure that kids speak in English. These things really attracted me. It felt like they were sincerely trying to improve the students' English skills.

A: I see. Ma'am, the third question is: do you believe that learning in English provides better opportunities in the future? Why or why not?

B: Of course. If we look at our own time, we started learning the alphabet from class six, right? Today's kids are growing up in a completely different environment. And honestly, most of us aren't well-suited for this new world of competition. Some parents are doing great — they're teachers or lecturers, and they have opportunities. But what percentage is that? Maybe 20%? The remaining 80% are not ready for this environment. So to keep up with today's competition and demands, English is really, really important for our children.

A: Right, ma'am. The fourth question is: do you think language affects academic performance or confidence?

B: Absolutely. These days, all competition, all job opportunities — everything starts in English. As soon as you step in anywhere, the conversation begins in English. All scholarships, all tests abroad — they're all in English. Even if a child doesn't have deep knowledge, just knowing English gives them confidence.

A: Got it, ma'am. Fifth question: which language did you study in during your school years?

B: I studied in Urdu. English was just a subject. At that time, we didn't have English used for communication — we just studied it as a subject and that's it.

A: And how did that affect your learning?

B: I had to struggle a lot in life. I wasn't prepared for many opportunities. But I worked really hard — as much as I could. And it helped me a lot — professionally and personally as well.

A: Thank you. Now the sixth question: when it comes to language learning, do you prefer private or government schools?

B: I prefer private schools. In government schools, there isn't much focus on language learning.

A: Seventh question: what advice would you give to other parents when choosing a school based on the language of instruction?

B: I would definitely advise parents to prioritize English. It has been imposed on us — now everything official, business communication, emails, office decorum, scholarships, competitive exams — everything is in English. So yes, I would advise that they focus on learning English.

A: Would you send your child to a school that teaches only in your mother tongue?

B: No, I wouldn't. There are two reasons. It's really, really great to see how in developed countries they only use their native languages. They don't even like to speak English. For example, when I was in Turkey, they were uncomfortable using English and preferred Turkish. That's why they're ahead — because they've done everything in their own language. Now, if I talk about my own case — our national language is Urdu, our home language is Pashto, and English is our business language. Our children are struggling with all three. For example, when I tell my child, "This is pishi, this is billi, this is cat," he gets confused. But this is a need. If it wasn't necessary, I would've definitely sent him to a mother tongue school. But unfortunately, it's not practical right now.

A: Right ma'am. Next question: what do you think is the best language for early education in a multilingual city like Quetta?

B: Since Urdu is our national language, kids pick it up easily — whether from shopkeepers or through general interaction. They learn their mother tongue at home. So the focus should be on English — that's what really needs attention.

A: Now we have a question: if the government improves Urdu medium schools and the quality of education there, would you still prefer English medium schools?

B: If Urdu medium schools improve, and they provide quality English instruction as well, then of course. You already know how expensive private schools have become — they're charging a lot. So if the system becomes strong, not just me, but every parent would prefer that. Why not!

A: This is the last question: what kind of future do you imagine for your child, based on the language they are learning?

B: I hope my children study hard, complete O-Levels and A-Levels, go abroad for further studies, and then come back and serve our country.

A: Thank you so much, ma'am, for your time and responses.

B: Thank you too! I'd love to read your research once it's published — please let me know.

A: InshAllah, ma’am. Please keep us in your prayers.

B: Best of luck!

Participant I: Female

A: Assalamualaikum Miss.

B: Walaikum Assalam.

A: We need to conduct interviews for our research, specifically with parents whose children are currently enrolled in school. We will respect your privacy, including the privacy of any recordings. You are free to withdraw at any time, and you may skip any question if you wish.

B: Okay.

A: Your name?

B: Zainab

A: Your age?

B: 32

A: Your occupation?

B: Housewife

A: And your education level?

B: FSC

A: Okay We'll now begin the interview. Our first question is:

How did you decide which school to send your child to? (Probe: What were the most important factors?)

B: The most important factors would be that first of all; I would look at the school environment that what kind of environment it has. And how the teachers are whether they are friendly with children or not, or whether they just scold the children to make them study. That would be the first thing I'd look at.

A: Did the language used in the school (Urdu, English, or regional language) influence your choice? How?

B: English is mostly prioritized more than Urdu or even our own Balochi language. But I think there should be a place for every language in schools. These days only English is given more importance, but schools should teach Urdu as well, and Balochi should also be included as a subject. It shouldn't just be English only.

A: Do you believe that learning in English gives better opportunities in the future? Why or why not?

B: Yes, nowadays the environment is such that English is given more importance. A person who knows English gets better job opportunities. Those who don't know English face more difficulties in getting jobs. So yes, obviously English is more important in today's time.

A: Do you think language affects your child's academic performance or confidence? In what way?

B: Yes, it affects. Umm… in the sense that our child will know how to communicate. In English, Urdu, and Balochi he/she will be able to communicate easily with anyone and will be able to speak with confidence.

A: What language did you study in during your own school years? How did it affect your learning?

B: I studied in both English and Urdu. Both were beneficial for me. It wasn't like the only focus was on English language, we were taught both. But in today's generation, there's more focus on English. Urdu doesn't even have as many subjects anymore.

A: Alright, moving to the sixth question: Which school do you prefer in language learning private or government schools? Why?

B: Whether it's private or government whichever has a better environment, with good teachers will be preferred. It doesn't matter if it's private or government. The school environment and the behavior of teacher matters the most, because the teacher's behavior affects the child's future studies.

A: What advice would you give to other parents about choosing a school based on language?

B: I would advise that Balochi is our own language, it's our mother tongue. Urdu is our national language. And English is also very important in today's time. So whichever school teaches all three languages properly, that's where you should enrol your child. I wouldn't say just because a school teaches English well, you should send your child there. It should teach all three languages.

A: Would you send your child to a school that teaches in your mother tongue only? Why or why not?

B: No. Balochi is our mother tongue, but our children can go anywhere in the world. People may or may not understand Balochi. So, children should be taught English and Urdu as well. I would send my child to a school where they can learn all languages.

A: What do you think is the best language for early education in a multilingual place like Quetta?

B: In Quetta, many languages are spoken, because it's a multilingual city. So, for early education, I think it should start in Urdu, then English. Gradually Balochi can come in. But Balochi isn't even taught in most schools these days. So Urdu and English.

A: If the government improves Urdu-medium schools, would you still prefer English-medium? Why or why not?

B: Urdu language is good for our local areas, but when our children go abroad anywhere in the world so they must be able to understand English.

A: So, you would still prefer English-medium?

B: Yes, I would prefer English-medium.

A: Alright, last question is, what kind of future do you imagine for your child based on the language they are learning in?

B: I imagine a future where my child is given an education that includes Urdu language, regional language, and English. I want them to be fluent in English and also speak Urdu and Balochi well. I value all three languages equally.

A: Alright. Thank you, Miss Zainab, for your time.

B: You're most welcome.

Research-Edited by Sami Ullah

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